

REMARKS/ ARGUMENTS

Applicants would like to thank Examiner Stein for the helpful and courteous discussion he had with Applicants' U.S. representative on September 15, 2005. At that time, Applicants' U.S. representative presented claim amendments to differentiate the claimed article over the cited reference (Yokozawa, U.S. 3,629,666). Applicants' U.S. representative noted that Yokozawa describes, in Fig. 2, a semiconductor with a passivating film that has a thickness of from 1000 to about 2000 Å (0.1 to 0.2 µm). Applicants proposed amending Claim 1 to limit the thickness of the layer on the article from 1 µm to 1 mm noting that this thickness is about 5 times greater or more than the thickness of the layer described in Yokozawa. The Examiner indicated that this amendment would overcome the rejection over Yokozawa.

As the Examiner will note, Applicants have amended the claims as discussed above. Yokozawa fails to teach or suggest all the claim limitations of the presently claimed article, and therefore, the claimed article would not have been obvious over Yokozawa. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections over Yokozawa.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner rejoin withdrawn Claims 18-20 should Claim 9 be found allowable. Claims 18-20 are process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of Claim 9, and therefore, should be rejoined (M.P.E.P. § 821.04).

In addition, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner rejoin withdrawn Claims 31-33. Claims 31-33 are process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of allowed Claim 21. Accordingly, the claims should be rejoined.

In light of the remarks contained herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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